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From: Vesco, Lynnette [mailto:Lynnette.Vesco@mms.gov]

Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2005 1:23 PM

To: MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov

Cc: Hill, Maurice

Subject: MLPAComments: MLPA Master Plan Framework Comments from MMS

John J. Kirlin

Executive Director

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative

Dear Mr. Kirlin:

We have reviewed the "Revised Draft Master Plan Framework" prepared by the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative's Blue Ribbon Task Force. We are encouraged to see this well thought-out framework. We offer the following thoughts for consideration when preparing the Regional and MPA goals:

We believe that there is a larger vision that should be defined first before determining the goals and objectives for the regional and individual MPA's. The overarching vision which should be specifically defined at the beginning by the State may be reached by considering the scientific answers to the following:

What is the reserve network supposed to do?

What "condition" do we want the coast to be in? How should it look when we're done?

What is it that we hope the MPA's will solve?

Possible choices might include:

To right problems and recover from perturbations identified over the past decade.

To repair damage to coastal ecosystems over the previous XX years

To return areas to: (specify condition)

To maintain a "healthy" coastal ecosystem (define healthy—high biodiversity? sustained populations?)

To return specific animal or plant populations (specify which ones) to health

To see a return of absent species

It has to be clearly defined—not in broad statements like "protect the coast" but very specifically so it is clear how to set up MPA's, how to set goals and objectives for each one, and how to monitor them to determine if they are meeting the goals. While there are many good visions, the highest priority or overarching vision should be clearly stated because many choices are mutually exclusive. The State's overarching vision should be stated succinctly so that all decisions stem from a common purpose.

The question of the State-wide concept of MPA's should be dealt with at the state-wide level before one can set goals, objectives, and monitoring programs for the specific MPA's.

If you have any questions about our comments, please feel free to contact Mr. Maurice Hill directly. His vcard is attached. For your information and records, please note that our Regional Manager is now Ellen Aronson.

Thank you.

Lynnette L. Vesco

Chief, Office of Environmental Evaluation

MMS Pacific OCS Region